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Psychological Stability and its Relationship to responsibility among Baghdad university Teachers

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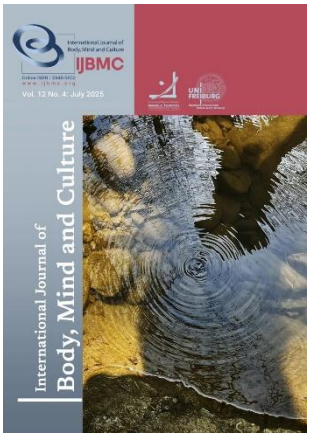

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to explore the relationship between psychological stability and responsibility among university lecturers.

Methods and Materials: A descriptive research design was employed, targeting 200 university lecturers at the University of Baghdad, selected through stratified random sampling. The participants were equally distributed by gender and academic specialization. Data were collected using the Psychological Stability Scale, based on Maslow's theory, and a Responsibility Scale encompassing national, personal, and social responsibility components. Statistical analyses, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis, were performed using SPSS version 26 to assess relationships and predictive power.

Findings: Descriptive statistics revealed moderately high levels of psychological stability ($M = 83.45$, $SD = 12.76$) and responsibility ($M = 76.89$, $SD = 10.34$). Pearson correlation analysis showed significant positive relationships between psychological stability and responsibility ($r = 0.64$, $p < .001$) and its components: national ($r = 0.58$, $p < .001$), personal ($r = 0.66$, $p < .001$), and social responsibility ($r = 0.61$, $p < .001$). Regression analysis revealed that psychological stability accounted for 41% of the variance in responsibility ($R^2 = 0.41$, $F = 54.29$, $p < .001$), with personal responsibility being the most strongly influenced component ($\beta = 0.33$, $p < .001$).

Conclusion: The findings highlight the critical role of psychological stability in fostering responsibility among university lecturers. These results suggest the need for institutional interventions to enhance teachers' mental health and well-being, with a focus on building personal accountability and resilience to optimize professional performance.

Keywords: Psychological stability, responsibility, university lecturers, mental health, professional accountability, educational psychology.

Introduction

The role of psychological stability and its relationship to responsibility has become a significant focus in educational psychology, particularly in contexts such as university teaching, where educators face diverse pressures and expectations. Psychological stability, defined as an individual's ability to maintain emotional balance and resilience in the face of challenges, is critical for effective functioning and professional satisfaction (Masslow, 1962). This stability is closely tied to the sense of personal and social responsibility, which enables individuals to fulfill their roles in personal, social, and professional contexts (Sagone & De Caroli, 2014). In the academic environment, where educators mold future generations, understanding the interplay between these variables offers insights into fostering well-being and productivity among teachers.

Psychological stability is foundational for educators, as it influences their ability to handle job-related stress, engage effectively with students, and maintain a balance between their professional and personal lives (Hidayati, 2023). Similarly, Abrol, Bansal, and Kishore (2022) emphasize the connection between teachers' psychological stability and their professional commitment, noting that stability enhances motivation and resilience, even amidst demanding circumstances (Abrol et al., 2022).

In university settings, teachers are often burdened with academic responsibilities, administrative tasks, and research obligations. These demands can strain their mental health, making psychological stability a critical area of concern (Okeke et al., 2024). The stressors faced by educators are not uniform but vary depending on factors like specialization, gender, and institutional support (Al-Frehat, 2020). For instance, Hafan (2010) found that university students' psychological stability often correlates with their professors' ability to model resilience and adaptability, suggesting that educators' well-being has a direct impact on their students' experiences (Hafan, 2010).

Schultz (1995) argues that responsibility is deeply rooted in personality traits and is often reflected in consistent behavior patterns (Schultz & Schultz, 1995). Educators, as role models, bear a dual burden of personal and social responsibility, which can impact their psychological well-being. Research by En (2023) highlights that teachers empowered through transformational leadership exhibit higher levels of responsibility and greater psychological stability, indicating a reciprocal relationship between these constructs (En, 2023).

University educators often operate in environments characterized by high expectations, limited resources, and societal pressures (Costa, 2024). Such conditions can disrupt psychological stability and undermine a sense of responsibility. Gadermann (2023) observed that during global crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, educators' mental health suffered significantly due to increased workload and uncertainty (Gadermann, 2023). Similarly, Rangkuti (2024) reported that high school teachers in Indonesia experienced elevated work stress, adversely affecting their psychological well-being and professional efficacy (Rangkuti, 2024).

The interplay between psychological stability and responsibility becomes particularly complex in challenging contexts. Liu et al. (2022) found that distributed leadership has a positive influence on teachers' psychological stability by fostering organizational trust and shared responsibility (Liu et al., 2022). However, when educators feel unsupported or undervalued, their sense of responsibility may wane, leading to decreased well-being and performance (Wilson et al., 2023). These findings underscore the need for institutional frameworks that support teachers' mental health and foster a culture of shared accountability.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs provides a theoretical framework for understanding psychological stability among educators. According to Masslow (1962), individuals achieve psychological stability when their basic needs, such as security and a sense of belonging, are met. In academic settings, this translates into fair compensation, supportive work environments, and opportunities for professional growth (Masslow, 1962). Research by Dreer (2023) supports this perspective, showing that teachers' well-being during field experiences predicts their long-term psychological stability (Dreer, 2023).

Responsibility, on the other hand, is closely tied to self-determination theory, which posits that individuals are motivated to fulfill their potential when they experience autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Stark et al., 2022). This theory explains why teachers

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who perceive their work as meaningful and impactful are more likely to exhibit high levels of responsibility and psychological stability (Minh, 2024). Jones et al. (2017) elaborate on this connection, suggesting that ambition and responsibility are intertwined, with each reinforcing the other.

Despite extensive literature on teacher well-being and responsibility, few studies have explored the direct relationship between psychological stability and responsibility among university educators in contexts like Iraq. While international studies provide valuable insights, the unique sociocultural and institutional dynamics of Iraqi universities require localized investigation. Furthermore, existing studies often focus on either psychological stability or responsibility as isolated constructs. For example, Listyaputri (2023) examined teachers' resilience but did not explore its connection to responsibility (Listyaputri, 2023). Similarly, Yob et al. (2022) reviewed factors affecting teachers' well-being during the pandemic but did not investigate how responsibility mediates these effects (Yob et al., 2022). This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the interplay between psychological stability and responsibility among university lecturers, considering variables such as gender and specialization.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between psychological stability and responsibility, identifying the factors that influence this dynamic.

Methods and Materials

Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive research design to examine the relationship between psychological stability and responsibility among university lecturers. The descriptive method was chosen because it allows for a detailed investigation of variables and their interactions without manipulating the environment, making it particularly suitable for exploring psychological and behavioral phenomena.

The research population consisted of all lecturers at the University of Baghdad during the 2024–2025 academic year, totaling 7,601 individuals, of whom 3,940 were male and 3,661 were female. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representativeness and balance between genders and academic specializations. A total of 200 participants were selected, divided equally between men and women (100 each). Furthermore, equal representation was maintained between lecturers from scientific disciplines and those from the humanities, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of psychological stability and responsibility across diverse academic contexts.

Data Collection Tools

The Psychological Stability Scale was based on the framework developed by Al-Khazraji (2006), which draws on Maslow's theory of human motivation (Al-Khazraji, 2006). This scale consisted of 29 statements divided into five dimensions: (1) feeling reassured, reflecting mental comfort and security; (2) self-acceptance, encompassing compatibility with one's social roles and satisfaction with academic and social environments; (3) accepting and tolerating others, which involved interpersonal relationships and community connectedness; (4) simplicity and spontaneity, capturing genuine interactions and positive attitudes toward life; and (5) reconciliation of social roles. Participants rated each statement on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "always applies" (1) to "never applies" (5), with the scale designed in a positively oriented direction. To ensure the validity of the scale, its content was reviewed by a panel of 10 experts in educational psychology. The panel evaluated the clarity, relevance, and alignment of each item with the intended dimensions, resulting in an 87% agreement on the appropriateness of the items. Reliability testing included test-retest methods with a subgroup of 50 lecturers, yielding internal consistency coefficients ranging from 0.76 to 0.82 for individual dimensions and an overall reliability score of 0.84, as measured by Cronbach's alpha.

The Responsibility Scale was developed based on a review of existing tools and literature on social responsibility, incorporating elements from studies by researchers such as Bani Yassin and Mahmoud (2012), Musharraf (2009), and Al-Omari (2007). This scale consisted of 21 items, categorized into three dimensions: national responsibility, personal responsibility, and social responsibility. Participants responded to each item using a three-point scale ("always," "sometimes," "no"), with scoring reversed for negative items to maintain consistency in interpretation. Validity was confirmed through expert review by psychology professionals at the University of Baghdad and Al-

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Mustansiriya University, with 83% agreement on the suitability of the items. The reliability of the Responsibility Scale was established using internal consistency measures, yielding satisfactory Cronbach's alpha coefficients.

Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies, were used to summarize participant responses. To explore the relationship between psychological stability and responsibility, as well as to assess the impact of variables such as gender and specialization, regression analysis was conducted. This statistical approach enabled the identification of predictors and the quantification of their effect on the dependent variables. All tests were performed at a significance level of 0.05 to ensure the robustness of the findings. The results provided insights into the interplay between psychological stability and responsibility among university lecturers, offering a foundation for the subsequent interpretation and discussion of the findings.

Findings and Results

The descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Psychological Stability	83.45	12.76
Responsibility (Total)	76.89	10.34
National Responsibility	25.12	5.84
Personal Responsibility	26.34	6.11
Social Responsibility	25.43	5.47

The descriptive statistics in Table 1 reveal that the average score for psychological stability among participants was 83.45 (SD = 12.76). Responsibility had a mean of 76.89 (SD = 10.34), with its components—national responsibility (M = 25.12, SD = 5.84), personal responsibility (M = 26.34, SD = 6.11), and social responsibility (M = 25.43, SD = 5.47)—showing comparable dispersion.

Table 2

Correlation Table

Variable	Pearson Correlation (r)	p-value
Psychological Stability	1.00	-
Responsibility (Total)	0.64	< .001
National Responsibility	0.58	< .001
Personal Responsibility	0.66	< .001
Social Responsibility	0.61	< .001

The Pearson correlation analysis in Table 2 demonstrated a significant positive correlation between psychological stability and total responsibility ($r = 0.64$, $p < .001$). Among the components, personal responsibility had the strongest correlation with psychological stability ($r = 0.66$, $p < .001$), followed by social responsibility ($r = 0.61$, $p < .001$) and national responsibility ($r = 0.58$, $p < .001$). These findings suggest a robust association between the variables.

Table 3

Summary of Regression Results

Source	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Squares	R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	F	p-value
Regression	18502.35	1	18502.35	0.64	0.41	0.40	54.29	< .001
Residual	26517.63	198	133.94					
Total	45019.98	199						

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The regression analysis in Table 3 indicated that psychological stability significantly predicted responsibility, accounting for 41% of the variance (R^2 = 0.41, Adjusted R^2 = 0.40). The overall regression model was statistically significant (F(1, 198) = 54.29, p < .001), demonstrating that psychological stability has a meaningful influence on responsibility.

Table 4

Multivariate Regression Table (Including Components of Responsibility)

Predictor	B	Standard Error	β	t	p-value
Constant	25.67	4.32	-	5.94	< .001
Psychological Stability	0.61	0.08	0.64	7.37	< .001
National Responsibility	0.18	0.06	0.24	3.00	< .003
Personal Responsibility	0.27	0.07	0.33	3.86	< .001
Social Responsibility	0.22	0.05	0.30	4.40	< .001

The expanded multivariate regression results in Table 4 include the components of responsibility—national, personal, and social responsibility—as well as the overall measure of psychological stability. Psychological stability remained the strongest predictor of responsibility (B = 0.61, SE = 0.08, β = 0.64, t = 7.37, p < .001). Among the components, personal responsibility showed the strongest relationship with psychological stability (B = 0.27, SE = 0.07, β = 0.33, t = 3.86, p < .001), followed by social responsibility (B = 0.22, SE = 0.05, β = 0.30, t = 4.40, p < .001) and national responsibility (B = 0.18, SE = 0.06, β = 0.24, t = 3.00, p < .003). These findings highlight the nuanced contributions of each component to the overall relationship between psychological stability and responsibility.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study explored the relationship between psychological stability and responsibility among university lecturers, with a focus on how these constructs interact and the influence of psychological stability on various components of responsibility. The findings demonstrated a significant positive relationship between psychological stability and responsibility, underscoring the critical role of emotional and mental balance in fostering accountability and role fulfillment among educators.

The descriptive statistics revealed that the mean score for psychological stability was moderately high (M = 83.45, SD = 12.76), indicating that participants generally experienced a stable psychological state. Responsibility scores (M = 76.89, SD = 10.34) and its components—national responsibility (M = 25.12, SD = 5.84), personal responsibility (M = 26.34, SD = 6.11), and social responsibility (M = 25.43, SD = 5.47)—were also relatively high, suggesting that lecturers maintained a strong sense of accountability in their professional and personal lives. These findings align with earlier studies that emphasize the significance of psychological well-being in maintaining high levels of professional commitment and accountability (Abrol et al., 2022; Hidayati, 2023).

The Pearson correlation analysis showed significant positive relationships between psychological stability and all components of responsibility, with the strongest correlation observed for personal responsibility (r = 0.66, p < .001). This finding aligns with Kuo's (2022) demonstration that teachers with high levels of psychological efficacy tend to exhibit greater optimism and accountability in their roles (Kuo, 2022). Furthermore, the regression analysis revealed that psychological stability accounted for 41% of the variance in responsibility, indicating its substantial predictive power. Personal responsibility emerged as the strongest contributor, which corroborates the findings of Joshi (2022), who emphasized the role of mental well-being in enhancing teachers' personal and professional accountability.

The study's results align with the broader literature on teacher well-being and responsibility. Gadermann (2023) found that teachers' psychological health was significantly affected during the COVID-19 pandemic, with those exhibiting higher levels of stability demonstrating greater resilience and accountability. Similarly, Wilson, Sellman, and Joseph (2023) reported that teachers' perceptions of "doing well" and "being

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well" were closely tied to their ability to fulfill their professional responsibilities effectively (Wilson et al., 2023).

The findings also support theoretical perspectives, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which posits that psychological stability is a prerequisite for self-actualization and fulfilling social roles (Masslow, 1962). In line with this framework, lecturers with a stable psychological foundation are more likely to engage positively with their responsibilities, both personally and professionally. Dreer (2023) highlighted this dynamic, showing that teachers with stable emotional states were better equipped to navigate complex professional demands (Dreer, 2023).

Interestingly, the multivariate regression analysis revealed nuanced contributions of responsibility components to the overall relationship with psychological stability. Personal responsibility was the most strongly influenced by psychological stability, followed by social and national responsibility. This hierarchy of influence suggests that individual accountability is more closely tied to psychological states than to broader social or national responsibilities, which can be influenced by external factors. These findings align with those of Liu et al. (2022), who noted that personal accountability serves as a critical mediator between organizational trust and teacher well-being (Liu et al., 2022).

The significant predictive power of psychological stability for responsibility underscores the need for institutions to prioritize the mental health and well-being of educators. As noted by Hidayati (2023), fostering a supportive environment that enhances teachers' psychological resilience can lead to better role fulfillment and professional satisfaction (Hidayati, 2023). Furthermore, the role of personal responsibility as a key mediator suggests that interventions aimed at strengthening individual accountability could amplify the positive effects of psychological stability.

The study also highlights the interconnectedness of psychological stability and responsibility in shaping educators' professional efficacy. En (2023) emphasized that leadership styles that empower teachers enhance their psychological stability and, consequently, their ability to fulfill responsibilities (En, 2023). Institutions must therefore adopt holistic strategies that address both psychological and organizational factors to optimize teacher performance.

This study, while comprehensive, is not without its limitations. First, the research relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Participants might have exaggerated or understated their psychological stability or sense of responsibility, potentially skewing the results. Second, although the sample size is sufficient for statistical analysis, it may not fully capture the diversity of experiences among university lecturers, particularly across different cultural and institutional contexts. Third, the study's cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality between psychological stability and responsibility. Longitudinal studies would be more effective in capturing the dynamic interplay between these constructs over time.

Future studies could address the limitations of this research by incorporating a mixed-methods approach that combines quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. Such an approach would provide deeper insights into the lived experiences of educators and the contextual factors that influence their psychological well-being and sense of responsibility. Additionally, expanding the sample size and including lecturers from different universities and regions could enhance the generalizability of the findings. Investigating other potential mediators, such as organizational culture, leadership styles, and workload management, would also offer a more nuanced understanding of the factors that shape teacher well-being and accountability.

Educational institutions should prioritize initiatives that enhance psychological stability among educators. This could include providing access to mental health resources, implementing stress management workshops, and fostering a supportive work environment. Leaders should also recognize the importance of empowering teachers by involving them in decision-making processes and acknowledging their contributions. Furthermore, targeted professional development programs that focus on building personal accountability and resilience could amplify the positive effects of psychological stability on professional responsibility. By addressing these areas, institutions can foster a healthier and more productive educational environment for both educators and students.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Babylon Ethics Committee (approval number: 48-2023)."

Transparency of Data

By the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

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